



# Resurrection

Metropolitan Community Church

4th Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2009

Prelude

HeavenSound Handbells

*Night of Our Creator's Love*

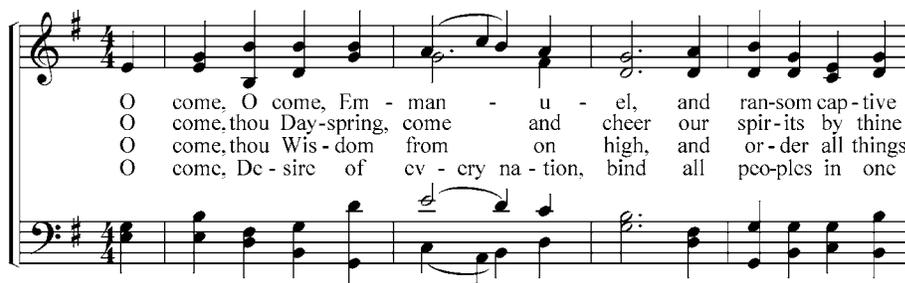
Our Community Gathers

Rev. Dwayne Johnson & Rev. Janice Ladd

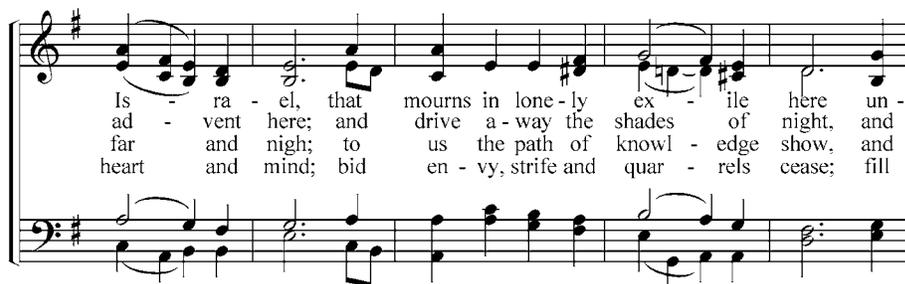
+ Exchange of Peace

+ Hymn

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*



O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 O come, thou Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by thine  
 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things  
 O come, De - sire of ev - ery na - tion, bind all peo - ples in one



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here un -  
 ad - vent here; and drive a - way the shades of night, and  
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl - edge show, and  
 heart and mind; bid en - vy, strife and quar - rels cease; fill



til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 pierce the clouds and bring us light! Re - joice! re - joice! Em -  
 cause us in her ways to go.  
 all the world with heav - en's peace.



man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

+ Please rise in body or spirit.

## We Gather

From many places we gather here. This is a high point of our week. We see our friends. We make new friends. And we spend time with The Friend -- the loving Christ who meets us where we are, as we are. In this Sanctuary we worship and through worship the courage within us is kindled to inspire courageous living beyond this place.

## We Hear the Word

As we look upon the candle of Love, let us lift Joseph's name. At great risk and with great courage, Joseph chose to trust in God, stand fast with Mary, and make a home for love. In his love for God, in his love for Mary, Joseph made a way for the Light of the World: the Love of Christ. Let us prepare for the dawning of a new church year with Joseph as our guide: renewing our commitment to God through choices founded upon trust in God and our commitment to those at our side through the practice of steadfast love. Let us live forth the Light of the World: the saving Love of Christ.

### + Lighting of the Candle of Love

Rico Sangel

### + Congregational Invocation

ALL: Holy One, we imagine your love flowing over us and your face shining upon us that we might be secure in you. May we seek only to do your will, loving as you have loved us. Loving radically. We pray that our hearts and minds can recognize how you do great things for us, filling us with good things, so that our souls too might continue to magnify the Lord and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior, for our hope, peace, joy and love is in you, Emmanuel, God-with-us, the provider of even more than we can ask or imagine. Amen.

### Scripture

*Luke 1:26-38*

Sharri McGlaathing

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Child of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I have not known a man?' <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Child of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.' <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

### Song

*Breath of Heaven / Mary's Song*

Sanctuary Choir

Words & Music by Amy Grant & Chris Eaton. Arranged by Roger Emerson

### Scripture

*Matthew 1:18-25*

Ron Drumm

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man desiring to protect her from public disgrace, planned to separate from her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their turning from God.' <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, 'God is with us.' <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took Mary as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and they named him Jesus.

Song

Christopher Plata

Joseph's Lullaby

+ Congregational Response

It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo - rious song of old, from an - gels bend - ing  
 For lo, the days are hasten-ing on, by proph - et bards fore - told, when with the ev - er-  
 near the earth to touch their harps of gold; "Peace on the earth, good will to all, great  
 cir - cling years comes round the age of gold; When peace shall o - ver all the earth it's  
 news of joy we bring." The world in sol - emn still-ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.  
 an - cient splen-dors fling, and all the world send back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Scripture

Carlos Rivera

Luke 2:1-7

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Song

Sanctuary Choir

T'was a Cold and Wintry Night

Arranged by Jimmy Owens

Scripture

Georgette L. Monaghan

Luke 2:8-20

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!'

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

We Hear the Word

Surely no one experienced Immanuel, "God with us," as did Mary, Jesus' mother. She who watched the Son of God expand her belly and shift his form insider her; who cradled in her arms a newly born, yet infinite, suckling babe; who taught a boy to walk and talk while sitting before him, her Teacher; who let go her grown offspring to see him embrace and die for a much larger family—this Mary lived as mama to God-made-flesh, while bowing in her heart to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Her role nearly unthinkable, Mary approached it with great emotion, with awe. At first she simply stood perplexed at what would be, then sat amazed at the Child's coming and the confirmation from hosts of heaven as well as shepherds and learned foreigners. She pondered the words of the angel and the testimony of the shepherds, and as the story of Jesus unfolded before her she treasured each piece in her heart. Mary knew she had been the site of holy Miracle, the habitation of divinity.

Her faith made her theotokos, "God-bearer" or "mother of God," and yet she first believed by the act of God's grace within her. And we too, though not God-bearers in a physical sense, share Mary's God-invaded status. In his grace Immanuel has been at work in us long before we knew him.

*The Renovaré Spiritual Formation Bible,*  
p. 1885

# Advent

As we begin the Christian Year, we also celebrate the Holy Season known as Advent. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for the coming of our Messiah. Advent means "Coming." We celebrate the days of Advent in expectation and preparation for Christ's arrival. Through the centuries, Christians have observed a time of waiting and expectation before celebrating the birth of the Savior at Christmas. The Advent season is a time for reflection and preparation, but its mood is joyful. As it proclaims the revelation of God's love as expressed in Christ's birth in a humble stable, Advent makes innkeepers out of all of us, asking each of us to make room for the arrival of Christ, the Light of the World. We anticipate the Light of Christ with the ritual lighting of a candle in the Advent Wreath on each Sunday of the season. The circle of candles in a wreath reminds us of the eternal Presence of God, while the colors of the candles – three purple and one pink – symbolize the Sovereignty of Christ who rules with hope, peace and love, bringing joy into our world. The large white candle in the center is known as the Christ candle, and points to Jesus as the Christ, the Light of the world. The flame of each new candle in Advent reminds us that something Holy is happening in our midst . . . and that more is still to come.

## Song

Children's Choir

*Away in a Manger*

## Making Ministry Happen

Tricia Phillips  
Board of Directors

## Offertory

CC

*O Holy Night*

## Scripture

Carlos Rivera

*Matthew 2:1-12*

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.'<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup> "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.'<sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

## Song

Resurrection Singers

*O Come, O Come Emanuel*

## Scripture

Sharri McGlaughting

*Luke 2:25-32*

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took the child Jesus in his arms and praised God, saying, <sup>29</sup> 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'

*Unto Us a Child is Born*

**Communion**

Rev. Kristen Klein-Cechetti  
Jason Wood

Introduction to Communion

Words of Institution

Prayer of Consecration

Invitation to the Feast

**Communion Songs**

*Emmanuel*

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, your name is called Emmanuel;  
God with us, revealed in us; your name is called Emmanuel.

*Jesus, Name Above All Names*

Jesus, name above all names; Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.  
Emmanuel, God is with us; Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts the joys of highest heaven.  
No ear may hear Christ's coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

*Away in a Manger*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

*Holy Ground*

We are standing on holy ground, and I know that there are angels all around;  
Let us praise Jesus now. We are standing in Your presence on holy ground.

We are standing on holy ground, and I know that there are angels all around;  
Let us praise Jesus now. We are standing in Your presence,  
We are standing in Your presence, We are standing in Your presence  
on holy ground.

**We  
Receive**

All congregations in  
MCC practice an  
open communion.  
We believe that  
communion is a  
visible sign of Christ's  
presence and  
God's grace that each  
one of us, friend or  
member, may receive.  
Simply come forward  
as the ushers direct.

During Communion  
you will be offered  
bread and cup with a  
brief blessing.

We use grape juice  
for the cup so that all  
may participate.

If you desire a deeper  
partnering in prayer  
(intercessory prayer),  
our Fishers Net  
Prayer Ministry team  
is available following  
both services to  
pray with you.

*Receive God's  
sufficient grace -  
the gift of freedom  
in God's love.*

**We Sing**

We sing as a  
body during the  
distribution of the  
elements. If you do  
not wish to sing,  
please be in an  
attitude of prayer for  
those who wish to  
meditate during  
this time.

***Gloria in Excelsis Deo***

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

+ **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Jason Wood

+ **Scripture**

Ron Drumm

***John 1:1-5***

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> The Word was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Jose Zuniga

***Juan 1:1-5***

<sup>1</sup> En el principio ya existía el Verbo, y el Verbo estaba con Dios, y el Verbo era Dios. <sup>2</sup> Él estaba con Dios en el principio. <sup>3</sup> Por medio de él todas las cosas fueron creadas; sin él, nada de lo creado llegó a existir. <sup>4</sup> En él estaba la vida, y la vida era la luz de la humanidad. <sup>5</sup> Esta luz resplandece en las tinieblas, y las tinieblas no han podido extinguirla.

**Song**

Gospel Ensemble

***Silent Night***

Arranged by Kirk Franklin

**Song**

Gospel Ensemble

***No Christmas Without You***

Words & Music by Kirk Franklin

+ **Benediction**

Rev. Kristen Klein-Cechettini

Jason Wood

**Postlude**

Joel Hammett

**We Go Forth**

God's love cannot be contained within the walls of this Sanctuary. Take the love of Christ from this place into your homes, neighborhoods and communities.



**Shared Ministry & Farewell Celebration**

**TODAY!**

12:30 pm, Activities Building  
*Lunch catered by The Spaghetti Warehouse*

Join us as we gather to remember over 13 years of shared ministry with Rev. Dwayne. Write a farewell message in his "blessings book." Have your photo taken with Rev. Dwayne.

## Staff

### Rev. Dwayne Johnson

Senior Pastor

RevDwayne@ResurrectionMCC.org (x101)

### Rev. Janice Ladd

Executive Pastor

RevJanice@ResurrectionMCC.org (x104)

### Mark Eggleston

Director of Outreach

Mark@ResurrectionMCC.org (x106)

### Craig Felderhoff

Director of Operations (Interim)

Craig@ResurrectionMCC.org (x102)

### Rev. Kristen Klein-Cechettini

Director of Life Development

RevKristen@ResurrectionMCC.org (x107)

### Jason Wood

Director of Connections

Jason@ResurrectionMCC.org (x105)

### Joel Hammett

Organist & Accompanist

### Rev. Mona Lopez

Volunteer Staff Clergy

RevMona@ResurrectionMCC.org

### Debbie Mansfield

Nursery Coordinator

### Sara Navarro

Graphic Artist

### Joel Palomares

Youth Ministries Program Coordinator

Joel@ResurrectionMCC.org

### Steven Ponder

Sanctuary Choir Director

### Anthony White

Gospel Ensemble Pianist

### Cassandra White

Gospel Ensemble Director

Cassandra@ResurrectionMCC.org

### Jim Winslett

HeavenSound Handbells Director

### Jose I. Zuniga

Facilities Technician

Jose@ResurrectionMCC.org

## Worship

Sunday, 9 & 11 am / Wednesday, 6:30 pm

Children & Youth Worship  
Sunday, 11 am

Nursery  
Sunday, 9 & 11 am

## Resurrection MCC

2025 West 11th St, Houston, Texas 77008

Phone 713-861-9149 / Fax 713-861-2520

www.ResurrectionMCC.org

# Welcome!

If you are attending Resurrection Metropolitan Community Church for the first time, we are glad to have you here! We invite you to join us each week as we worship God and learn more about Christian living in an inclusive way. All are welcome.

**Make sure to visit the Concierge Desk, located in our Welcome Area, to receive a gift from us.** You will find friendly volunteer hosts waiting to greet you.

## Worship Services

Resurrection MCC is proud to offer a variety in our worship services. Our two Sunday services, at 9 & 11 am, are identical in form, however they contain different elements from diverse religious traditions each week.

## A Special Welcome to our First-Time Families!

Our nursery staff would love to meet you and your infants & children aged 1-3 years! The nursery is located to the right of the Sanctuary entrance and is open during both the 9 am & 11 am services.

Children and youth aged 4-12 years are invited to join our Youth Ministries Program during the 11 am service in the Activities Building (located across the breezeway from our main parking lot). Sign-in begins at 10:45 am. All children must be registered and signed-in to attend. Parents are welcome to join the children for Communion at 12 noon in the Activities Building. Snack & sign-outs begin at 12:15 pm.

## About Us...

Resurrection MCC is a Christian church with a primary outreach to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. We are a part of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, founded by Rev. Troy D. Perry in Los Angeles, California on October 6, 1968.

Metropolitan Community Churches are on a bold mission to transform hearts, lives, and history. We are a movement that faithfully proclaims God's inclusive love for all people and proudly bears witness to the holy integration of spirituality and sexuality. Because of our faith we are called to: do justice, show kindness, and live humbly with God (Micah 6:8); explore life's questions with open hearts and minds; raise our voices in sacred defiance against exclusion, whether religious, political or systemic; reach out to those with no hope; equip new generations of remarkable, far-reaching spiritual activists.

The **Mission** of Resurrection MCC is to demonstrate God's unconditional love to all people through Christian action.

The **Vision** of Resurrection MCC is to **ATTRACT** people into a relationship with God through radical **INCLUSION** into God's family, transform them to Christ-like **MATURITY**, and **MOBILIZE** them for their life purpose.

At Resurrection MCC, every member and friend is a minister of the church. We envision a Christian community that values diversity and is as diverse and all-encompassing as creation. Through salvation, service, study, and tithing, each member and friend will live and grow in faith and be spiritually fed. To that end, we embrace five core beliefs:

**We believe** in God's unconditional love for everyone.

**We believe** in the saving grace of Jesus Christ and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

**We believe** in including everyone and excluding no one.

**We believe** in joyfully providing access to Christ-centered spiritual nourishment and Biblical truths.

**We believe** that each of us will discover our spirituality through active participation in the work of God and in the pursuit of health, wholeness, and justice for everyone.

**Again, welcome!**



# The Chalice

*opening...receiving...offering  
Life in Fullness*

**No Chalice on December 30**

*The Promise of the Cup:  
Seeking the Presence of God  
we become that which we seek.*

## **Community Meal**

6:00 - 6:30 pm | Activities Building  
*simple supper, open to all*

## **Spiritual Deepening**

6:30 - 7:00 pm | Activities Building  
*new & ancient practices of prayer,  
meditation & worship*

## **Life Development Offerings**

7:00 - 8:30 pm

**ADVENT OFFERING: DECEMBER 2, 9, 16, 23**

## **CONNECTION GROUPS**

**7 - 8:30 pm, Activities Building**

### ***Put A Little Character into Christmas A Four Week Advent Study***

Many of us are trying to figure out how to meet someone around here! How do you find potential friends? How do you begin conversations? You may want to check out Connection Groups.

We can't promise you'll find your next best friend. People can just be weird. You know that. Some of them might show up for Connection Groups. They may think you are weird. But here's the deal – it's only four weeks. You've held down a job you've hated for longer than four weeks. You can do anything for four weeks. The worst thing that can happen is that you'll walk in here every week and increase the odds that you'll see a face you recognize. And it may even be someone you like to be around.

**COMING IN JANUARY, 2010**

Looking ahead, join us for an exploration of the Four Agreements, a return of Living the Questions, and an opportunity to explore your spiritual life through creative expression. All open series, all beginning Wednesday, January 6.



## **AS WE TRANSITION**

As we prepare ourselves for the changes and transitions we will undergo together in 2010, the Board of Directors wants to share with you an update on our transition process.

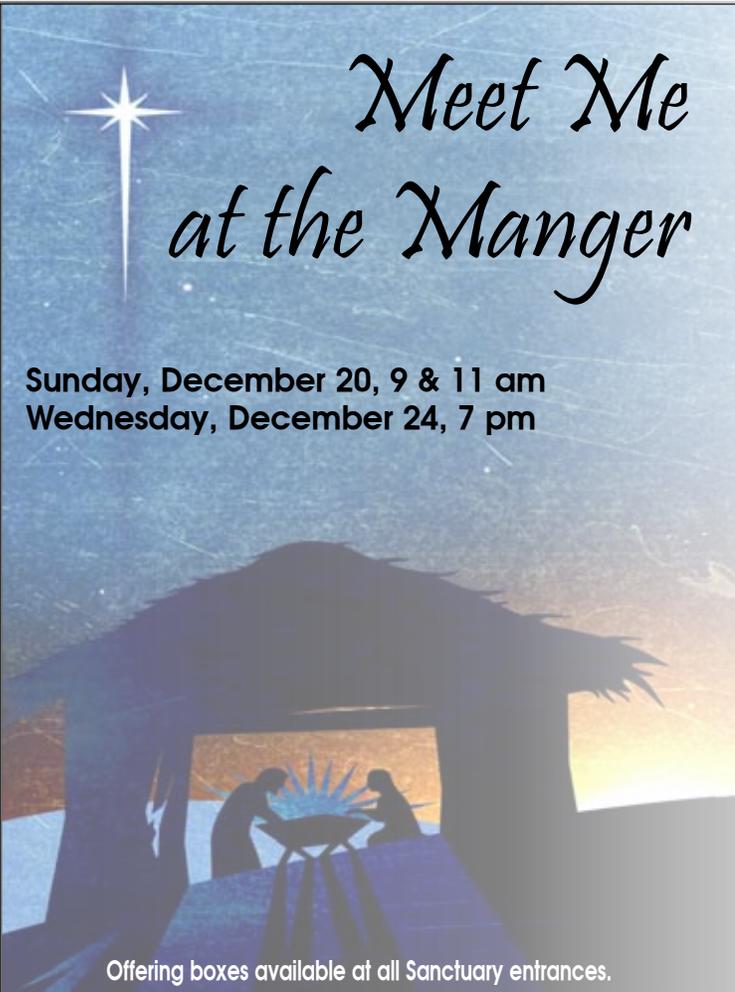
On November 14, Rev. Elder Lillie Brock met with the Board of Directors and the Executive Team. This retreat, planned months in advance with an anticipated focus on the relevance of church size, provided us with an opportunity to discuss the future of Resurrection MCC. We were extremely blessed to have Rev. Elder Brock's expertise available to us regarding our transition and pastoral search. Rev. Elder Brock recommended that our congregation would best be served by moving forward utilizing our existing staff, rather than calling in an Interim Pastor. As such, Rev. Janice and Rev. Kristen will deliver our Spiritual Encouragement each Sunday. Assistance from MCC clergy and other guests will be used as needed. Prioritizing use of our own clergy and staff supports continuity and continued momentum as Resurrection responds to the Spirit's leading during this season.

Regarding the questions which have been posed about the pastoral search process, our established Church structure provides us with a representative democracy; our members have elected a Board of Directors to serve and represent the entire body. In response to the recommendation and guidance of our denominational elders, the Pastoral Search Committee will make use of our existing representative democracy as it calls forward the five members of the Board of Directors whose terms continue through the whole of 2010: Karla Johnson, Debbie Skelly, Elisa Vega-Burns, Mary Wagner, and Wayne Wiggins. In addition, Mark Eggleston and Jason Wood will represent the Executive Team on the Pastoral Search Committee.

Congregational participation is critical in this process. As such, the Pastoral Search Committee invites you to attend a town hall meeting on Sunday, January 3, immediately following our 11 am service. The purpose of this meeting is for the Pastoral Search Committee to listen directly to your requests and concerns, as well as to answer any questions you have regarding this process. Each voice in our community of faith matters a great deal to us and we hope you will attend.

We are committed to an expedient and thorough executive search process. Please pray with us as we discern which candidate to present for congregational vote.

During this time of transition and opportunity, we ask for your continued support of Resurrection ministries. Your faithful attendance and consistent giving will be crucial to our church. As God moves among us, let us remember that God has great plans for our church and is caring for us on this journey. Together we can make 2010 a year to remember: a year of spiritual maturity and grace.



# Meet Me at the Manger

Sunday, December 20, 9 & 11 am  
Wednesday, December 24, 7 pm

Offering boxes available at all Sanctuary entrances.

**Church Family,**

As we find ourselves in a moment of transition, I encourage each of you to stand strong in your faith and remain obedient to God's word. Let's keep in mind that God speaks to us in the 'wilderness' so that we may reach the actual blessing that has been prepared for us.

**Galatians 6:10** "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers".

I believe Meet Me at the Manger is the perfect opportunity for our church family to do good for all people. The theme for this year's Meet Me at the Manger is 'opportunity born'. The invitation is to offer a financial gift that is at least \$1 more than what you spent for any gift. Meet Me at the Manger is an opportunity from God, born to all of God's children. Please join me in a season of committed giving and obedience, as we work together to receive God's blessings in 2010.

**May God Bless You**

**Tricia Phillips  
Board Member**

## *Come! Celebrate Christmas*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 9 & 11 AM**

Join us as we tell the Christmas story through music, dance and drama.

## *Shared Ministry & Farewell Celebration*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 12:30 PM**

Share with us as we celebrate over 13 years of ministry together and bless Rev. Dwayne as he goes forth in his call to Washington, DC.

## *Christmas Eve Communion Service*

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 7 PM**

All are invited as we welcome the Light of the World, with Rev. Dwayne bringing his final message as Senior Pastor of Resurrection MCC.

## *Kwanzaa*

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 6 PM**

All are welcome to join this celebration of traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement.



Rev. Dwayne Johnson  
Senior Pastor

Where diversity is both our gift and our passion. • [www.ResurrectionMCC.org](http://www.ResurrectionMCC.org) • Worship: Sundays, 9 & 11 am / Wednesdays, 6:30 pm  
Children & Youth Program / Friends & Fellowship / Holy Union / Sermon Podcast • 2025 W. 11th St. @ T.C. Jester, Houston 77008 / 713-861-9149

# Kwanzaa

## A Celebration of Family, Community & Culture

**Saturday, December 26  
6 pm, Activities Building**

by Elisa Vega-Burns



Kwanzaa is a unique African-American celebration with a focus on the traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement. Kwanzaa is neither political nor religious and, despite some misconceptions, is not a substitute for Christmas. It is simply a time for African-Americans to reaffirm and reinforce communitarian values and practices that strengthen and celebrate family, community and culture.

The word "Kwanzaa" comes from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits of the harvest" in the African language, Swahili.

The "First Fruits" are celebrated as we uplift principles which support and strengthen family, community and culture. The NGUZO SABA (The Seven Principles) lifted up during Kwanzaa are UMOJA (Unity), KUJICHAGULIA (Self-Determination), UJIMA (Collective Work and Responsibility), UJAMAA (Cooperative Economics), NIA (Purpose), KUUMBA (Creativity), IMANI (Faith).

There is a traditionally established way of celebrating Kwanzaa. First, you should come to the celebration with a profound respect for its values, symbols and practices and do nothing to violate its integrity, beauty and expansive meaning. Secondly, you should not mix your Kwanzaa celebration or its symbols, values and practices with any other holiday or cultural celebrations. Thirdly, choose the best and most beautiful items to celebrate Kwanzaa. This means taking time to plan and select the most beautiful objects of art, colorful African cloth, fresh fruits and vegetables, etc. so that every object used represents African culture and your commitment to Kwanzaa in the best of ways.

During Kwanzaa, we light the MISHUMAA SABA (seven candles: one black, three red, and three green), which together represent the seven Kwanzaa principles. The black candle represents the first principle Umoja (Unity) and is placed in the center of the Kinara. The red candles represent the principles of Kujichagulia (Self-determination), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) and Kuumba (Creativity) and are placed to the left of the black candle. The green candles represent the principles of Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Nia (Purpose) and Imani (Faith) and are placed to the right of the black candle.

The black candle is lit first on the first day of Kwanzaa (December 26); the remaining candles are lit afterwards alternating from left to right on the following days (December 27 through January 1).

The last day of Kwanzaa is January 1, the first day of the New Year. Historically this has been for African people a time of sober assessment of things done and things to do, and of self-reflection. Following in this tradition, this day of meditation is a time for us to ask ourselves and answer soberly and humbly the three Kawaiida (Kwanzaa value system) questions: Who am I? Am I really who I say that I am? and, Am I all that I ought to be? Thus, it is a time to recommit ourselves to our highest ideals.

Since its founding in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, Kwanzaa has come to be observed by more than 18 million people worldwide. Join us for this rich cultural celebration, as together we commit ourselves to our highest ideals for 2009.

For additional details about Kwanzaa, visit [www.ResurrectionMCC.org](http://www.ResurrectionMCC.org) and click on the Kwanzaa link. Please RSVP by December 21 to [Kwanzaa@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Kwanzaa@ResurrectionMCC.org).



### Fishers Net Prayer Ministry: A Dialogue with God

The reality of prayer is the opposite of how we communicate in our modern day world. We talk with our mouths and in our heads. We listen with our ears and believe what we see directly in front of us. Prayer is all about communication. Believing in what we are petitioning; asking God answers, feeling with our soul and listening with our heart. Many years ago, an eight year old girl just knew in her heart something was true, even when all those around her told her it did not exist, so she sent a letter to the Editor of the New York Sun. The reply she received was printed in the September 21, 1897 editorial section and to date is the most re-printed newspaper editorial and the cause for countless movies, books and a catch phrase still used today. The response was "Yes, VIRGINIA, there is a Santa Claus." Praise God we do not need to wait for an editorial response to our questions and petitions, we have a direct link to God through prayer. This season, what is your petition? What are your questions? What do you believe and what do you feel with your soul and listen with your heart? God wants to communicate with you, openly and honestly. Remember Matthew 21:22 "If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."

Dear Creator Father Mother God, I want to believe. I want to receive. I am ready and open to receive your blessings. I am open and ready to receive healing, financial abundance, your Grace and supporting people all around me. Oh, God, I thank you for answering my prayers. Amen.

Send your petitions and questions to [Prayers@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Prayers@ResurrectionMCC.org). Postings are published each week in a Prayers & Praises email, where others here and around the country will be praying collectively with you. To sign up for Praise and Prayer alerts, simply open the most recent Mobilizer and click on "Update profile / Email Address" at the bottom of the Mobilizer. Then make sure the box next to "Prayers and Praises" is checked. Click Save Profile Changes.

The Fishers Net Prayer Ministry is available for you in the Chapel between services and at the Alter after the 11 am service.

*Growing stronger in Christ and realizing our Prayers together.*

~ Fishers Net Prayer Ministry ~

## Join Us in a Celebration of Family, Community & Culture

# Kwanzaa

**Saturday, December 26  
6 pm, Activities Building**



Join us for a meal and time of celebration.

Please RSVP by December 21:

[Kwanzaa@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Kwanzaa@ResurrectionMCC.org)

# General Conference



**Imagine**  
ACAPULCO 2010 EPHESIANS 3:20

*Now to The One who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine*

### Registration

To register today, visit our website for more details and further information

### Location

Fairmont Acapulco Princess  
www.fairmont.com/acapulco  
800.441.1414  
506.863.6301

Group Name: UFMCC 2010 General Conference

### Contact Information

conferences@mccchurch.net  
Jennifer Justice, 213.447.2953  
Carlos Chavez, 310.489.3899

**2010**  
**JUNE 28 - JULY 2**



[www.generalconference.mccchurch.org](http://www.generalconference.mccchurch.org)



## Pastoral Search Committee Town Hall Meeting



Sunday, January 3  
12:30 pm, Sanctuary



The Pastoral Search Committee, joined by Rev. Elder Ken Martin, will present information on the pastoral transition process for our next Senior Pastor. We'll be discussing how church size plays a role in this process, as well as presenting an initial pastoral search timeframe. A time for questions will be held following the presentation.



# NEW YEAR

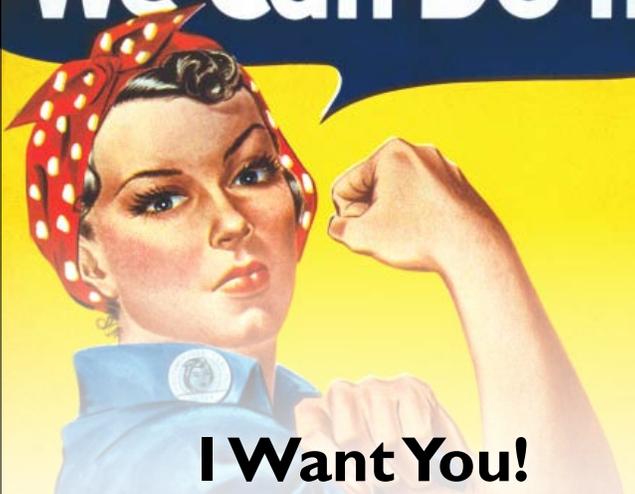
Have Your Decked Halls Turned Into Dark Caves This Holiday Season?

**New Year's Eve Service**  
Thursday • December 31 • 7 pm  
Sanctuary

It is not uncommon to experience loneliness, grief, sickness, unemployment, or financial distress during what is supposed to be the happiest time of the year. Any one of these challenges is apt to make you feel as if you have entered a dark cave. Take heart you are not alone in the cave!

Chris De John delivers a message entitled:  
**The Cave**

# We Can Do It!



## I Want You!

Do you have a smile, a hello, and 20 minutes a month? That's all it takes to be a part of the Welcome ministry.

Contact Jason at  
[Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org)

# WORSHIP ARTS

Resurrection MCC is so blessed to have a number of groups to minister at our worship services. Auditions are not required, but a desire to worship and share is. Feel free to visit any rehearsals to see which group might be the right place for you to serve.

## GOSPEL ENSEMBLE

Tuesdays • 7 pm

Directed by Cassandra White, this group sings music in the African-American Gospel tradition, traditional Spirituals and contemporary music of all types. Reading music is not required for this group, but the ability to match pitch and sing a part separate from the melody is.

## SANCTUARY CHOIR

Tuesdays • 7 pm

Directed by Steven Ponder, this group sings mostly traditional church choral music with some contemporary music added from time to time. Reading music is not required for this group, but the ability to match pitch and sing a part separate from the melody is.

## RESURRECTION SINGERS

Thursdays • 7 pm

Directed by CC, this small vocal ensemble serves as both a corporate worship leadership team for congregational song, and sharing through a wide variety of styles of music. Reading music is very helpful and regular rehearsal participation is required.

## ANGELS IN MOTION

This group is a dance troupe that ministers through dance and movement. This group has its own choreographers. Experience in dance is not necessary, if one has the willingness to learn.

## HEAVENSOUND HANDBELLS

Sundays • 1:30 pm

Currently there are several open spots in the handbell choir. Interested people need to have some music reading skills. Experience in ringing is not required. The director, Jim Winslett, will teach anyone the techniques of ringing.

## ADESTE PRAISE BAND

Sundays • 8:00 am

Directed by Jason Wood, this group will provide corporate leadership in worship through accompanying congregational song and pieces from other ensembles. Moderate to advanced level of proficiency on your instrument required. For information about current openings contact Jace Hill.

If you have interest in any of these groups, please email [Worship@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Worship@ResurrectionMCC.org)

## Get Connected to a First Impressions Ministry

### Concierge Desk

**Wendy Hand**

[Concierge@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Concierge@ResurrectionMCC.org)

*Do you like to help people feel welcome and included?*

We need loving, warm and friendly people to serve at the Concierge Desk, located in the Gathering place, before and after both Sunday Worship Services! This desk helps welcome new friends, provide them with a free gift, and help them get connected.

### Inspirations Coffee Cafe & Gift Shop

**Ana Tarver**

[Inspirations@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Inspirations@ResurrectionMCC.org)

Looking for new friendly faces and volunteers for this ministry! Provide outstanding customer service in an atmosphere of fellowship for people to make connections.

### Second Family Care Partners

**Kristia Ammerman**

[SecondFamily@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:SecondFamily@ResurrectionMCC.org)

This care team acts as extended family and friends, offering emotional, practical, and spiritual support. Meets for lunch 1st Sun. at 12:30 pm.

### Ushers

**Dave Mathis**

[Ushers@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Ushers@ResurrectionMCC.org)

We need ushers for 9 & 11 am Sunday Worship Services. Teams serve one service (either 9 or 11 am) each month. Remember, "No one is *JUST* an usher."

### Welcome Team

[Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto>Welcome@ResurrectionMCC.org)

*Do you like helping people feel special and welcome the moment they arrive to the church?*

We want to welcome people to the church and help them get to where they need to go. Team members are positioned at every door and sidewalk, greeting people with a smile and kind word, offering directions or answering questions.

***If you have questions or would like to join any of these teams, email the team lead (listed above) or contact Jason Wood at [Jason@ResurrectionMCC.org](mailto:Jason@ResurrectionMCC.org) or 832-971-0354.***



## Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor New Enrollment Period

The *Neighbor to Neighbor* program allows Resurrection MCC the opportunity to earn a portion of \$1 million that will be donated annually. The program earning period is July 1, 2009 through April 30, 2010. During the last program period, Resurrection MCC earned almost \$2,000!

To participate in the program, simply take this printed page on your next shopping trip and have the cashier scan it at the beginning of the order.

Below are a few frequently asked questions of the program:

### Can a household “link” their Kroger Plus Card to more than one organization at a time?

No, the system allows for one organization per household. To change organizations, you must present your Kroger Plus Card and the new organization’s barcode to the cashier.

### Do I have to enroll each program year?

YES, all organization’s and participants must re-enroll for each new enrollment period. The current *Neighbor to Neighbor* Program is effective July 1, 2009 through April 30, 2010.

### Do I have to scan the organization letter each time I shop?

No, once the barcode is scanned with your plus card, you are enrolled for the remainder of the program year, ending on April 30, 2010.

### How much can my organization earn?

The Kroger *Neighbor to Neighbor* Donation Program will donate \$1 million annually. Each organization will earn a percentage of the \$1 million equal to the percentage of total earned contributions attributable to that organization.

RESURRECTION METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH



Additional information available at  
[www.krogerneighbortoneighbor.com](http://www.krogerneighbortoneighbor.com)

*Kroger cashier: Please scan customer’s KrogerPlus Card at the beginning of the order, and then scan the above barcode. The customer’s KrogerPlus Card is now enrolled in the Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program.*

## Why Become a Legacy Giver?



- To stimulate our worship experience through audio/visual enhancements.
- To forge new friendships through a revitalized, enlarged Welcome Center.
- To design a space that will transform lives by converting the Activities Building into the Life Development Center.
- To create committed leaders for tomorrow through expanded children and youth programs.
- To inspire adults to vitality and wholeness through increased education, wellness, community involvement, and spiritual growth opportunities.
- To reach millions with the *Would Jesus Discriminate?* billboard and marketing campaign.
- To impact the lives of those oppressed through further partnerships with organizations focused on social justice.
- To create financial health and long-term stability through increased payments on our debt.

**Commitment cards may be picked up at  
The Concierge Desk and Sanctuary entrances.  
Please return in offering basket or by mail.**



## LOVE MAKES A FAMILY: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People and Their Families

A touring photo-text exhibit created by the award-winning **Family Diversity Projects**.  
Photos by Gigi Kaeser and interviews edited by Peggy Gillespie.

**ON DISPLAY NOW  
IN WELLNESS CENTER & GATHERING PLACE**

Photographs by Gigi Kaeser depict a variety of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and their families of all races in familiar family settings. The photos are accompanied by text edited by Peggy Gillespie from in-depth interviews she conducted with each family member — including children like Liza—who speak candidly about their lives, their relationships, and the ways in which they cope with the realities of prejudice, bias, and intolerance on a day-to-day basis.

**Sponsored by Resurrection Wellness Center**

## LGBTQ Solutions for Living Well

Professional Services Provided at  
Resurrection MCC Wellness Center

### Connections

A 12-Session  
Psychoeducational  
Shame-Resilience  
Curriculum



Revised and Expanded  
Brene Brown, Ph.D., LMSW

**There is hope for change, empowerment  
and living authentically!**

*Connections:*

*A 12-Session Psychoeducational Shame  
Resilience Curriculum*

Facilitated by Tammy S. Fountain, LPC, ATR-BC

Call 832-863-8221

Course developed by Brene Brown, PhD,  
LMSW, researcher, educator & writer. Learn  
to identify and overcome shame through  
exercises, handouts and lecture.

In order to provide a safe place for  
discussion and healing from experiences unique to people  
of sexual orientation or gender identity difference,  
group limited to LGBTQ participants.

### Women's Group Now Forming

Mondays, 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Therapist: Tammy S. Fountain, LPC, ATR-BC

Call 832-863-8221

### Adolescent Group Psychotherapy

Saturdays, 12:00 - 1:15 pm

Therapist: Tammy S.  
Fountain, LPC, ATR-BC

Call 832-863-8221



### New Men's Group Therapy *The Gentlemen's Club*

*Are you stressed out, worried, or  
depressed? Struggling to balance a job and  
a family without everything falling apart?*

*This group provides a safe space to talk  
about issues affecting men today, ranging  
from relationships/family issues, financial/  
job related stress, depression, anxiety, grief,  
and major life changes.*

\$40 per group.

Group open, space limited.

Mondays, 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Call Michael at 713-446-8034

Therapist: Michael Mann, LCSW



Individual, family, and couples therapy available.  
Request MCC Rates.

Michael Mann, LCSW / 713-446-8034  
Adolescents & Adults

Tammy S. Fountain, LPC, ATR-BC / 832-863-8221  
Children, Adolescents & Adults

## 'Tis the Season of Giving

2009 has been a difficult year for us all. The severe recession has impacted us financially, emotionally, and to a certain extent, spiritually. Many of us have not only lost jobs, income and the value of our savings and investments, but also the sense of confidence and faith we had when things were stable and growing. Understandably, when faith is challenged, an institution such as Resurrection MCC, which is supported by faith-inspired giving, experiences a reduction in giving.

In the face of such reality, we have taken the painful, but prudent, course of reducing our expenses substantially. We have rethought just about every aspect of our operation—from our open hours to the way we use and maintain space to the size of our staff and breadth of our programs. You should expect no less of us.

On the other hand, I hope you'll agree with me that it is exactly our faith that enables us to see true priorities and to continue to be the generous and adventurous spiritual home we believe God is calling us to be. We're still open for prayer, worship and loving service most days of the year. We put the worship of God at the very heart of our open house of God. We offer the highest quality music, Sunday after Sunday. We teach the faith and study together in several settings every week. Our population of families with children—and the support we offer them—is growing. We serve increasing numbers of the poor and underserved with our food pantry. To make all that possible with a reduced budget requires staff and volunteers to work harder and smarter. And they do.

However, there is only so much all this change and hard work can support. So, I ask you to do three things, as acts of faith:

- Pray as often as you can for the mission and faithful integrity of Resurrection MCC.
- Come when you can—to Sunday worship, above all, or to a weekday service or class or volunteer opportunity.
- Please make a year-end gift above and beyond your usual weekly or monthly contribution.

Congregation, we need your prayers. We need your presence. We need your financial support. In that order.

Wishing you a blessed holiday season,

Elisa J. Vega-Burns  
Treasurer, Board of Directors



Providing Spiritual Direction for individuals and groups at Resurrection MCC.  
 Sliding Scale fees available for Resurrection members and friends.  
 First session is free.  
 Cathleen Sheil, MA  
 Certified Spiritual Director  
 sacredjourney2@aol.com  
 713-304-9913



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How can **YOU** increase **OUR** Imagine Campaign Fund?  
**Here's how...**  
 Simply refer or use my services as your Realtor, to Buy or Sell a home. Once the transaction is complete a donation in your name will be made to the Imagine Campaign.  
*Together we can make a difference!*  
**suzanne anderson** PROPERTIES  
 713-822-8555  
 www.SellingHomesInHouston.com

Pamela Efferson, Realtor

**Stewardship Thought for the Week**

*Material possessions will rust away, wear away, or depreciate, but your inner resources - character - must never depreciate. In seeking success you must also seek fulfillment. Ask yourself not only what you want to be, but who you want to be.*

~ Elizabeth Dole

**Advertise with us.**

As low as \$25 / week.

Ads@ResurrectionMCC.org

**Board Members on Duty**  
 Karla Johnson & Tricia Phillips  
 Board Minutes Available Upon Request.

**Flowers in the Sanctuary**  
 Consider donating flowers in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special day.  
 Sign up on the Flower Chart in the Welcome Area.

**General Fund Financial Report** **Week Ending December 13, 2009**

		Week	Year	
<i>Tithes &amp; Offerings</i>				
12/13/09 9:00 am	107	\$2,680.00	\$155,625.89	
12/13/09 11:00 am	338	\$6,800.60	\$316,978.26	
12/09/09 6:30 pm	27	\$141.00	\$4,532.32	
Special Services			\$6,225.90	
Online Giving		\$255.00	\$65,669.97	
Other Contributions		\$11,630.00	\$134,480.22	
<b>Total</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>\$21,506.60</b>	<b>\$683,512.56</b>	
<i>Other General Fund Income</i>				
Fundraising		\$240.00	\$3,232.65	
Miscellaneous		\$170.94	\$61,090.62	
<b>Total Received</b>		<b>\$21,917.54</b>	<b>\$747,835.83</b>	
<b>Projected Need per Budget</b>		<b>\$17,653.85</b>	<b>\$830,553.85</b>	
<b>Total Exceeded Need / (Did Not Meet Need)</b>		<b>\$4,263.69</b>	<b>(\$82,718.02)</b>	
<b>Total Imagine Capital Campaign</b>		<b>\$1,320.00</b>	<b>\$108,488.40</b>	

Projected Need	Actual Received	Actual Spent
\$830,553.85	\$747,835.83	\$714,593.04

# This Week @ ResurrectionMCC.org

## SUNDAY DECEMBER 20

- 8:00 am Adeste Praise Band Rehearsal *Sanctuary*
- 9:00 am Sunday Worship / Come! Celebrate Christmas**
- 10:15 am Fisher's Net Prayer Ministry (Everyone Welcome) *Chapel*
- 10:45 am Youth Ministries Program *Activities Building*
- 11:00 am Sunday Worship / Come! Celebrate Christmas**
- 12:30 pm Shared Ministry & Farewell Celebration *Activities Building*
- 1:30 pm HeavenSound Handbells Rehearsal *Music Room*

## MONDAY DECEMBER 21

- 6:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting *Gathering Place*
- 6:00 pm Christmas Basket Distribution *Activities Building*

## TUESDAY DECEMBER 22

- 7:00 pm Gospel Ensemble Rehearsal *Music Room*
- 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal *Sanctuary*

## WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 23

- 6:00 pm The Chalice: Community Meal *Activities Building*
- 6:30 pm The Chalice: Spiritual Deepening *Activities Building*
- 7:00 pm The Chalice: Connection Groups *Activities Building*

## THURSDAY DECEMBER 24

- 7:00 pm **Christmas Eve Worship / Rev. Dwayne Johnson**

## FRIDAY OFFICE CLOSED DECEMBER 25

*No Events Scheduled*

## SATURDAY OFFICE CLOSED DECEMBER 26

- 6:00 pm Kwanzaa Celebration (see ad, p. 10) *Activities Building*
- 10:00 am Future Clergy Meeting *Workroom*

## SUNDAY DECEMBER 27

- 8:00 am Adeste Praise Band Rehearsal *Sanctuary*
- 9:00 am Sunday Worship / Members of Gospel Ensemble**
- 10:15 am Fisher's Net Prayer Ministry (Everyone Welcome) *Chapel*
- 10:45 am Youth Ministries Program *Activities Building*
- 11:00 am Sunday Worship / Members of Gospel Ensemble**
- 1:30 pm HeavenSound Handbells Rehearsal *Music Room*